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(416) POL 14 VIET S

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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H C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4505
SAL AUGUST 26
IO HEREWITH DANANG TELEGRAM NUMBER 71 DATED AUGUST 25
P SIGNED FRANCIS
USIA
NSC QTE
INR
CIA REF: POLAD 070
NSA
DOD 1. AUG 24 QUANG NGAI [ ] CONFIRMED THAT
NIC CANDIDATE LE QUANG CHUONG HAD BEEN DISQUALIFIED BECAUSE HE HAD
AID IGNORED HIS DRAFT NOTICE. [ ] WAS VAGUE BUT IT APPEARS
THAT SINCE SLATE HAD NO ALTERNATE REJECTION OF FIRST CANDIDATE
AUTOMATICALLY DISQUALIFIED ENTIRE SLATE AND IT WAS APPARENTLY
RSR NOT NECESSARY TO GO INTO ALLEGED COMMUNIST CONNECTIONS OF
THIRD CANDIDATE NGUYEN TOAN.

2. 165,000 VOTERS HAVE BEEN REGISTERED IN QUANG NGAI. [ ]
[ ] SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THIS WAS THIRD HIGHEST IN ENTIRE

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COUNTRY.

3. [ ] PREDICTED THAT 80 PCT OF REGISTERED VOTERS WOULD ACTUALLY GO TO THE POLLS.

4. THERE WILL BE 147 POLLING PLACES SPREAD THROUGHOUT SECURE AREAS OF THE PROVINCE.

5. VOTER REGISTRATION CARDS HAVE NOT BEEN ISSUED YET BECAUSE VIET CONG WOULD JUST TAKE THEM AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE. THEY WILL BE ISSUED JUST PRIOR TO ELECTIONS.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [ ] DATE [ ]
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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6. LAST WEEK PROVINCE CHIEF HELD SPECIAL MEETING OF ABOUT 250 OFFICIALS FROM VARIOUS AREAS OF PROVINCE TO EXPLAIN ELECTIONS AND DISCUSS WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF LOCAL OFFICIALS. MEETING WAS SUCCESS AND OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT PROVINCE NOW FULLY UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLE.

7. SAID THAT WITH REGARD TO THE ELECTIONS HE FEARED BUDDHISTS MORE THAN VIET CONG. HE PREDICTED THAT RADICAL BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP MIGHT INSTRUCT THE PEOPLE NOT TO BOYCOTT THE ELECTIONS BUT RATHER TO PURPOSELY CAST THEIR VOTES IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO AUTOMATICALLY INVALIDATE THEM.

8. HE POINTED OUT THAT "REGISTERED VOTERS WILL HAVE TO VOTE" BUT SINCE VOTE WILL BE CAST IN SECRET IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR

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THEM TO TEAR UP BALLOTS, CAST MORE THAN ONE BALLOT, AND OTHERWISE PURPOSELY INVALIDATE THEIR VOTE.

9. DOES NOT BELIEVE RADICAL BUDDHIST HAVE ISSUED THEIR INSTRUCTIONS YET. BETWEEN NOW AND ELECTIONS HE SAID THAT PLANS TO KEEP THE PEOPLE BUSY WITH MEETINGS RE ELECTIONS SO THAT THEY DON'T HAVE TIME TO ATTEND ANY MEETINGS BUDDHISTS MIGHT BE PLANNING. AS ELECTIONS APPROACH TIGHTEN CURFEW TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM GOING TO PAGODAS IN THE EVENING.

10. COMMENT: SPENT DAY MAKING UNANNOUNCED TOUR OF REMOTE HAMLETS IN NEWLY AVAILABLE AIR AMERICA CHOPPER. OBVIOUS THAT CADRE AND OTHER GVN AGENCIES HAVE BEEN VERY BUSY PROMOTING ELECTIONS. EXCELLENT CARTOON BOOKS, POSTERS, LEAFLETS, ETC SEEM TO HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT PROVINCE. ALTHOUGH INFORMATION CONCERNING CANDIDATES STILL HAS NOT REACHED THE VOTERS, EVERYBODY FROM SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN TO VERY OLD KNOW THAT NATIONAL ELECTIONS ARE GOING TO BE HELD. MANY PEOPLE SPOKEN WITH SEEMED SINCERELY PROUD OF THIS FACT. NO QUESTION BUT THAT ILLUSTRATED MATERIAL NOW BEGINNING TO REACH PEOPLE IN QUANG NGAI IS IMPROVING THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE ELECTIONS ARE ALL ABOUT.

POLAD FRANCIS GP-4.

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